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THE TWO SYSTEMS.

AUTOCRACY

OR

REPRESENTATIVE.

THE annual address to the Supreme Council of the United States of America, their Territories and Dependencies, by the Sovereign Grand Commander, in 1886, contained matter which lead to the inquiry, "Wherein is it more representative " than that of the Northern Jurisdiction ?

The positions occupied by the correspondents in their respective Councils, precludes the necessity of comment, further than to invite the attention of the thoughtful to the facts presented. The respondent does not pretend to have exhausted the subject-matter of reply, but the Supreme Council of the United States of America, its Territories and Dependencies, in its own interest, has requested a copy of the correspondence, and presents it in advance of the Annual Session in 1887.

"READ AND REFLECT."

CINCINNATI, December 29, 1886.

JOHN HAIGH, ESQ., Somerville, Mass.,

Dear Sir: —

Some kind friend, undoubtedly a member of the "Supreme Council of the United States of America, its Territories and Dependencies" ! has sent me a copy of your address delivered before the "Supreme Council of the United States of America, its Territories and Dependencies."

I notice the following in it: "We have much to boast of in the increase of new bodies and initiates and feel greatly encouraged in the continuance of the *only true system (Representative)* of Scottish Rite Masonry that can have permanent prosperity in this Republican country."

May I be permitted to ask you to have the courtesy to inform me wherein it is that your organization, "The Supreme Council of the United States of America, its Territories and Dependencies," is more Republican in its character, more of a Representative body than the Northern Supreme Council? I have been trying for a long time to get some member to enlighten me on this point; all use this republican rhetoric without stint, but I have been unable yet to find one who would venture to undertake the difficult task; several have promised me they would do so, but they have not; won't you favor me with the information.

Very respectfully yours,

E. T. CARSON.

SOMERVILLE, MASS., January 29th, 1887.

E. T. CARSON, ESQ.,

Dear Sir and Ill. Bro.: —

I fully intended to answer your letter at once. But I have had unexpected business engagements that took my time and thought. We had a disastrous boiler explosion at our mill, and it will take some time yet before we are in running order. I will answer yours as soon as I can have a little time.

Truly and fraternally yours,

JOHN HAIGH.

CINCINNATI, O., April 2, 1887.

JNO. HAIGH, ESQ., Somerville, Mass.,

Dear Sir and Fellow-Citizen: —

I have your letter of the 29th January, and have been waiting patiently to hear from you to explain that matter which you promised; about the Democratic force in your organic law, which ours does not contain. I know it is a hard nut to crack, and if you are able to crack it, I shall award you the first premium.

Truly yours,

E. T. CARSON.

SOMERVILLE, MASS., April 26th, 1887.

ENOCH T. CARSON, ESQ., 33°, Deputy for Ohio, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States of America.

Dear Sir and Ill. Bro.: —

I have heretofore informed you that by reason of important business interests, made more exacting by the necessity of rebuilding a portion of my Bleachery and Dye Works, consequent upon a boiler explosion, my reply to your letter of December 29th, 1886, had of necessity to be delayed. Your subsequent note of April 2d, 1887, reminding me of this,

indicates an anxiety on your part for a reply, which I had never intended, to avoid. You inquire "Wherein it is that your organization, 'The Supreme Council of the United States of America, their Territories and Dependencies,' is more Republican in its character, more of a Representative body, than that of the Northern Supreme Council?"

At the outset let me ask what is meant by "representative," and this being fixed, a better understanding may be arrived at. Webster defines "representative," an adjective, as "Bearing the character or power of another, as a council representative of the people." As a noun, "One who represents or stands in the place of another. An agent, deputy, or substitute, invested with his or their authority." If we carry these definitions further and look for their illustrations in the affairs of a State or the Nation, it will appear as a practical fact, that the people elect their rulers, whether Governors or President, and the popular vote determines who shall be invested with the powers and dignity of either office. To disclose wherein the Supreme Council of the United States of America, their Territories and Dependencies, is more "of a representative body," than that of the Northern Jurisdiction, I think can be done better in the language employed by the latter and its official representatives, than by using my own, or resorting to any declarations of, or in behalf of, the former. In this way I cannot be charged with unfairness if I show that the Supreme Council of the Northern Jurisdiction is not in any manner, a representative body, as defined by Webster and understood by the people of the United States of America, and finally, that the Supreme Council of the United States of America, their Territories and Dependencies is.

There is some vigorous reading in the printed proceedings of the Council of Deliberation of Ohio, for 1882, (page 15), wherein it appears that in 1880, the Illustrious Deputy for Ohio, offered an amendment to Article 79 of the Constitutions, Supreme Council, N.: J.:, to the effect of making Sov.: Gr.: Ins.: Gen.: of the 33d degree amenable to discipline for unma-

sonic conduct by the subordinate bodies of the Rite in which they hold membership. This was reported upon as follows, in the Supreme Council, N. J.: Your "Committee believe that this would not only be unwise, but in direct violation of the fundamental principles of the Rite." Following this, commenting thereon, the Deputy for Ohio reported to his Council of Deliberation (see Proceedings, 1882, page 15): "As the law now stands, a Sov.: Gr.: Ins.: Gen.: of the 33d degree is quite beyond the reach of discipline by any subordinate body of which he may be a member. He can violate the civil, moral or masonic law with perfect impunity, so far as his Lodge of Perfection, Council, Chapter or Consistory is concerned." See also your own foot-note on page 15, and your quotation of Article 20 of the Secret Constitutions, with comment by yourself thereon: "No person in the world has the right to institute any proceedings against a Sov.: Gr.: Ins.: Gen.: Grand Commander of the 33d degree; nor even cause him to submit to any penance, etc." In further expression of the thought which then animated you, it was a proper inquiry (see page 17), "By what magic wand or power have they been touched that they should be raised so far above their brethren the Princes of the Royal Secret, 32d degree, that they should be set apart as a Sacred Order of royalty or nobility, in the order exempt from the laws and responsibilities which in Masonry should govern and protect all alike, be they Secret Master or Sov.: Gr.: Ins.: Gen.:?" Have I not shown by your own evidences, officially given, that in the particulars spoken of by yourself, the Supreme Council, N. J., utterly ignores representation and pronounces pointedly against it? As being more representative than this, permit me to say, that under the laws of the Supreme Council of the United States, their Territories and Dependencies, if a Sov.: Gr.: Ins.: Gen.: 33d degree, should so far derogate from the character of a Mason as to commit a Masonic offence he can be put upon trial in a Lodge of Perfection of which he may be a member, or in the Consistory if one exists in the State.

Here I might safely conclude my reply, Brother Carson,

and rest upon this showing, but lest I may be considered to have exhausted the evidence, permit me to ask you to consider that presented by Michigan. By referring to the printed Proceedings of the Supreme Council, N. J.: 1880, page 56, 57, it will be seen that the Council of Deliberation of Michigan realized that it had no representative voice, in the proper sense, in that Supreme Council, and sought to remedy the defect, as the resolutions adopted, May 11th, 1880, and here quoted, pointedly show :

“Resolved, That it is of the utmost importance to the interest of the Rite in this State that in future the Council of Deliberation, recommend to the Supreme Council, the names of the Ill. Brothers that they may select to receive the Hon. Degree of 33 or Sovereign Grand Inspector General.

“Resolved, That the Ill. Deputy and active members of this jurisdiction be requested to present this subject at the next session of the Supreme Council, and ask that such changes be effected in the constitution of said Body, as will enable State Councils of Deliberation to carry out the spirit of the above resolutions.”

Evidently the Council of Deliberation of Michigan had not been permitted to nominate or elect one or more, nor any, from among their fellows, to receive the 33d degree, nor is there the faintest suspicion that its opinion had any weight in preferring the brother from Michigan, who received the grade at this session of the Supreme Council. In support of this, it is only necessary to cite the fact that the mover of the resolutions quoted, was an Hon. Sov. Gr. Ins. Gen. of the 33d degree in the Northern Jurisdiction and amply qualified by ability, knowledge and experience to state the case correctly (see printed Proceedings, Supreme Council, N. J., 1880, page 26).

To the ordinary masonic mind, these resolutions would appear reasonable, and more so, from the fact that Councils of Deliberation, include in their composition “the first three officers of Consistories and Chapters of Rose Croix, and the first four officers of Councils of Princes of Jerusalem and

Lodges of Perfection in each State"; who might quite as reasonably be expected to know something of the interests and needs of the Rite in their particular State. Certain it is, however, they had no rights which the Supreme Council felt bound in honor or conscience to respect, unless this lies in the fact that it was "Ordered that the Deputy of Michigan have permission to withdraw the paper" (printed Proceedings, 1880, page 104).

It is true the Supreme Council in 1881 (printed Proceedings, page 54), agreed that "It is now within the province of Councils of Deliberation to recommend Brethren for election as Honorary Members of the Thirty-Third Degree," etc., but that this is hollow fruit, needs not to be proven, beyond citing the experience of Councils of Deliberation. To this, however, I will refer hereafter.

Possibly it was a wise bit of moralizing by the Committee on the Condition of the Rite, to say in the concluding portion of their report, in 1883: "It is often the case, if not invariably so, that those who are animated by such a spirit over-estimate their qualifications." To the truthfulness of this, it is not likely that the brethren of Michigan could assent as applied to them, nor could they be any better satisfied with their non-representation in the Supreme Council. The order to withdraw their resolutions in 1880, had not resulted in quieting their perceptions, and it was in discussing the resolutions, renewed by Michigan Council of Deliberation, that the Committee went outside of their duty, to frame the remark above quoted. By referring to the printed Proceedings Supreme Council, N.: J.:, 1883, (pages 66-72), you will see that on May 8th, 1882, the Michigan Council of Deliberation adopted a series of resolutions, all in harmony with their former action, as will be seen in the following preamble:

"Whereas, It is the opinion of this Council of Deliberation, now assembled, after a full, fair and impartial consideration of the subject, that the manner heretofore pursued in this jurisdiction of naming members for the Honorary Degree of Thirty-Third by the active members of the State, does not

reflect the wishes of those most deeply interested ; neither is it a credit to the Rite ; therefore,

“Resolved, That this Council of Deliberation does most earnestly protest to the Supreme Council against the conferring of the Degree of Thirty-Third Mason upon any person who has not been regularly elected to that high honor by the Council of Deliberation, and whose election shall be regularly certified to the Grand Secretary General at least thirty days before the meeting of the Supreme Council.”

The five resolutions which follow this I need not quote, but will remind you of them, that you may read.

These repeated assertions by the bodies of the Rite, permitted to have certain officers in the Council of Deliberation, stand as solemn declarations that the Supreme Council of the Northern Jurisdiction, is not a representative Body, and its own action seen in reports of its Committees on the Michigan resolutions and kindred subjects, are equally conclusive in maintaining this declaration.

Can you, Brother Carson, bold as you are in pushing your opinions, question this conclusion successfully ? and if so, will that weigh against the adopted language of your Supreme Council, to wit : “A representative system of government would be an anomaly in Masonry in any of its branches. The principles of an autocratic system of government are among the peculiar characteristics of Masonry, etc. There is no legislative form of government under an elective franchise that could be made effective in carrying forward the design and purpose of the Order.” (See printed Proceedings, 1883, pages 69, 70.)

Need I tell you that under the Supreme Council of the United States of America, their Territories and Dependencies, such self-confessed and self-asserted autocratic power would not be received with a vote of approval, for that Body not only permits nominations to be made by the Grand Consistory, if one exists in the State, and if not, by the Lodge of Perfection to the 33d degree, but confers the grade on brethren thus approved and selected by their fellows.

Let me now return to the recommendations by a Council of

Deliberation, for the 33d degree, as affecting the action of your Supreme Council. No doubt you are aware of the fact, that under the Supreme Council of the United States of America, their Territories and Dependencies, the Grand Consistory is composed of members after the manner described in forming a Council of Deliberation, but with this difference: When a brother is elected in Grand Consistory to receive the 33d degree, the act is regarded as final and the degree is conferred accordingly. When so recommended by a Council of Deliberation, in the Northern Jurisdiction, the election is ignored and the action of that body is but vanity.

Is this statement too strong, think you? Let us see. Look over the entire proceeding in relation to the Michigan Council of Deliberation, that the doubt, if any, may be removed. Inquire, if not already informed, of certain facts in the history of Massachusetts Council of Deliberation. This Council in the exercise of its reputed right, formerly made nominations for the 33d degree for this purpose, as its printed Proceedings will show, a committee of five usually was appointed to recommend the proper quota of brethren for the honor. After this custom had been followed some years, and, one at least, manifestly unfit person had received the grade, by favor of the Ill.: Deputy, the recommendations by committees being ignored utterly, the Deputy for the State, presiding in Council, named Ill.: Bro.: William F. Salmon, 33°, with others, to present names of brethren, for approval or recommendation to receive the 33d degree. Ill.: Bro.: Salmon pointedly declined to serve on such committee, and gave as his reason that it was a waste of time, a mere mockery—for any recommendations heretofore made had been ignored—and the 33d degree conferred on some one favored by the Deputy or other active member of the Supreme Council, without any regard to the wishes of the Jurisdiction or that part of it more immediately affected. This episode I personally witnessed, and no doubt, Ill.: Bro.: S. C. Lawrence, 33°, Ill.: Bro.: Charles A. Welch, 33°, as well as many others will remember it.

But further than this, within a very few years, Erastus H. Doolittle and George S. Carpenter, one presiding over the Chapter of Rose Croix, the other of the Council of Princes of Jerusalem, in Boston, N. J., deliberately united with Edward de la Granja, to establish a Supreme Council in Boston, (you know the facts), and with others was admitted by him to the 33d degree. When Doolittle was put upon trial in Massachusetts Consistory for this defection — both recanted, and deserted the De La Granja Council, returned to the fold they first deserted — and in a comparatively short time both received the 33d degree in the Supreme Council, Northern Jurisdiction. In recounting these facts, I am criticising your Supreme Council only, for it is an open secret, if not of public information, that the Council of Deliberation did not recommend, nor could the nearly unanimous voice of something like fifty 33d degree honorary members in Massachusetts, besides the voice of many brethren, prevail against the one or two *Actives*, who desired that the grade should be conferred.

Need I tell you that the Supreme Council of the United States of America, their Territories and Dependencies would not have acted thus; the opposition would have been respected, the voices of those already Sov.: Gr.: Ins.: Gens.: would have been regarded, as representing the more general will, and this representative force would have stayed proceedings.

But let me return to Ohio, (see page 61-65, printed Proceedings, 1883, N. J.), touching resolutions of Enoch Lodge of Perfection, reported upon in Supreme Council:

"Whereas, From the report of the Ill.: Deputy Carson to the Council of Deliberation, we learn that a Law-making Body, to which 32d degree members were eligible, was in existence up to May, 1867"; that said body has never legally disbanded, that its last presiding officer is alive and in "good standing in the Rite to-day, and, *Whereas*," (I quote this as corroborative of what I have already said in reference to Ohio, and that the opinion of your Supreme Council on representation may be presented to the effect), "that the Masonic

system of government fails to provide for an elective representation," and has done so, for "untold centuries," that "there are thousands and hundreds of thousands" of Masons who "would regret the first step towards modification," etc., "particularly that feature which gives to it its aristocratic, monarchical peculiarity." "This is one of its life-springs which assures its perpetuity, and they are but few who feel themselves chafed by its exercise. Should a representative system of government ever fasten its poisonous fangs upon the vitals of the Ancient Accepted Rite, the death-knell of the Order will reverberate through every chamber of the Temple." Plainly, then, the Supreme Council, Northern Jurisdiction, not only asserts that it is not a representative body; but that it is an autocratic one, and re-enforces this by applauding its "aristocratic" and "monarchical peculiarity."

This was again urged by the Committee on the Condition of the Rite, (see printed Proceeding, 1884, pages 53-59, N.: J.:), and adopted. The report finds that, "Upon the institution of the Rite, so far as may be gathered from its annals, when the various Orders, consisting of *twenty-five Degrees were grouped*, and for years subsequent, its governing forces were centered in and exercised by a distinguished potentate, whose superior wisdom and abilities gave thought and direction to the government and conduct of the Rite, and whose dictum was implicitly complied with. The potentate referred to, was Frederick the Great, whose historical relations to the Rite are also stated; but upon the narration I need not comment, I do however remind you of this statement then accepted: "An equalizing principle of representation, such as is here contemplated, is really at variance with the organic systems of Masonry generally, and particularly obnoxious in this Rite, which germinated in autocracy, and is a principle of instinctive characteristics."

The thought as well as the expression seems to be a favorite one with the Supreme Council of the Northern Jurisdiction, that it is an "autocracy," or in other words, independent or self-derived power; a "self-created Supremacy." Not a

glimmer of representation in this, Brother Carson, and we may look in vain for it, under the control of Thirty-Third Degree Mason's, who so flippantly speak of their brethren and equals of Michigan, as "over-estimating their qualifications." No wonder that you once forgot the Autocracy and gave expression to the honest impulses of your heart, when you inquired concerning your Supreme Council, "By what magic wand or power have they been touched that they should be raised so far above their brethren, the Princes of the Royal Secret 32d Degree, that they should be set apart as a sacred order of royalty or nobility in the Order, exempt from the laws and responsibilities which in Masonry should govern and protect all alike, be they Secret Master or Sov. Gr. Ins. General?"

And just here you will find that the "hundreds of thousands" so sweepingly included in the report on Enoch Lodge of Perfection, will repudiate this assumption of authority by an "Autocracy," which is already too keenly felt and whose grasping power has come to be so apparent in the Blue or Grand Lodge system. An examination of the returns of your Supreme Council, 1886, shows that it had about ten thousand members of the 32d degree. It cannot be claimed, therefore, that Ill. Bro. Evans and his committee, and your Council meant to assert that these were the "hundreds of thousands" who "would regret the first step towards modification" of "autocratic and aristocratic" power. There was no cause for such fright that one should be magnified into a thousand; the other alternative must be that the autocratic eye was upon the "hundreds of thousands" of brethren in obedience to the State Grand Lodges who stand shivering in suspense and fear lest the "autocratic" patronage—indeed it is only logical to say "dictum"—of the descendants of Frederick the Great should be withdrawn, and so consign them to the perdition of choosing their rulers, and of selecting by ballot, whom they would prefer to be honored among them.

In this direction I may cite your letter to me, and to which this reply is made. Observe, if you please, that you omitted in all cases, the appellation of "Brother." Was not this in

obedience to the plan of the "Autocracy," the "self-appointed" power? that admits of "no modification." Is it not the mailed hand, crowding into the Grand Lodge system? the system wherein we are assured at the outset no interference is to be made or intended to be with duty to God, country, neighbor, or self; nevertheless, I who have been taught, and have taught this as Master of two different Lodges, as High Priest, Thrice Ill. Master, and Commander of a Commandery, all included in the "hundreds of thousands," and wherein I am also a permanent member in Grand Chapter, Grand Council, and Grand Commandery, am denied of Brother by you but in illustration clearly of the autocratic character the Supreme Council of the Northern Jurisdiction arrogates to itself. And yet you ask, let me hope innocently, "Wherein it is that the Supreme Council of the United States of America, its Territories and Dependencies, is more Republican in its character, more of a Representative body than the Northern Supreme Council?"

My answer is contained largely by producing history from the latter, and runs through this document. It is "more Republican and more Representative" in this: It has, in September, 1886, in Grand Consistory of ———, put a member of the Thirty-Third Degree upon trial, and expelled him for unmasonic conduct, thereby denying that a 33d degree is touched by any "magic wand" or other power that can put him beyond the reach "of discipline by any masonic body of which he may be a member."

It not only permits complaints to be made, but does not repulse or insult them by denial and with the assertion that those who make them "usually over estimate their qualifications." It gives, not permits only, to Grand Consistories the right to legislate on local affairs, and to govern their State organizations after the manner of Masons, witnessed more nearly in the Grand Lodge system.

It not only permits nominations to be made by election in subordinate bodies, of brethren to receive the Thirty-Third Degree, but confers the grade on brethren so elected. It does

claim the reserved power to confer the Thirty-Third Degree for meritorious cause, but does not ignore protests against such action, and override the practically unanimous objections of its Hon.: Sov.: Gr.: Ins.: Generals. It does not ask, but denies any right to Grand Lodges, Chapters or Commanderies to enact constitutional definitions in its behalf, and thereby seek to impose obligations which beget strife, promote discord, and thus bring reproach upon Freemasonry, at the "dictum" of a self-declared "Autocracy." In short, it confides in the integrity of its subordinate bodies, believes they are better acquainted with the local affairs of the Rite, and governs for the greatest good of the greatest number. Thus it cannot be an Autocracy or "self-derived power," and therefore is "more Republican in its character, and more of a Representative body than the Northern Supreme Council."

In the interests of Freemasonry, I beg to subscribe, as you addressed me, and to remain,

Yours,

JOHN HAIGH.

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